

Rep. Steve Driehaus

Last month, I came under attack for a vote I cast in support of women's health and education in underserved communities in greater Cincinnati and across the country.

I am proud of my record as a pro-life legislator and I am a member of the bipartisan Pro-Life Caucus in the House of Representatives. I opposed President Obama's decision to reverse the Mexico City policy which banned the use of taxpayer dollars to promote or fund abortions in countries receiving American aid. I have written to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi that I will oppose any healthcare legislation that would provide public funding for abortion. I will continue to stand up for greater Cincinnati's pro-life values, even when it is not politically popular or expedient.

But being pro-life means more than being anti-abortion. Pro-life values require us to protect life at all stages, and that means supporting policies that promote the health and well-being of our most vulnerable citizens, including the born as well as the unborn.

I recently voted against a measure that would have restricted the use of Title X funding. Critics of Title X have tried to misrepresent this critical women's health program, but the regulations are crystal clear: "None of the funds appropriated under this title shall be used in programs where abortion is a method of family planning." Instead, Title X helps to provide low-income women with healthcare services such as cancer screening and mammograms, as well as funding family planning services that help reduce the number of abortions.

Thousands of women in greater Cincinnati and millions more in the United States rely on Title X. I have been criticized for supporting Title X because Planned Parenthood is a provider of these services. While I strongly disagree with Planned Parenthood's position on abortion, they are currently one of very few organizations helping to provide the vital healthcare—mammograms, pap smears, cervical cancer screenings—that falls under Title X. To be clear, no Title X dollars can be used to provide abortions, no matter who receives the funding. The federal government has oversight authority to verify how Title X grants are used, and any provider that violates the regulations would lose Title X funding.

As a pro-life legislator, I support alternatives to providing Title X funding to Planned Parenthood. But until we find those alternatives I will not vote to punish low-income women and families by depriving them of this critical care. Such a vote would contradict a true pro-life stance and place an additional burden on those who are struggling most to access healthcare services.

I will continue to fight for pro-life policies in Washington, and I will ensure that a pro-life voice is heard as we move forward with healthcare reform in Congress. I will stand by my commitment to vote against any public funding for abortion, and I will represent our community's pro-life values on all components of this reform effort and every other issue that comes before me in Congress.